REVIEWS

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Liliya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher (eds.), *Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, Berghahn Books, New York and Oxford, 2019, 416 pp., 14 ills., index, a note on transliterations and toponyms; series: New Perspectives on Central and Eastern European Studies, 1

The volume *Rampart Nations. Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, edited by Liliya Berezhnaya, assistant professor at the University of Münster, and Heidi Hein-Kircher, a researcher at the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East-Central Europe in Marburg, is a result of cooperation between the two German institutions. It offers insight into the creation, functioning and persistence of myths, rhetoric and ideologies of religious, cultural and political bulwarks, or *antemuralia*, in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of the book is as much historical as it is political. This is evident in the fact that the historical material is set in the context of recent political events, including Ukrainian-Russian relations before and after the Crimean conflict, the rise of anti-immigrant rhetoric in Poland, Hungary and East Germany (see in particular chapter 14: *Concluding Thoughts*…), while also addressing the issue of the cultural identities of the Belarusian, Ukrainian and Georgian nations vis-à-vis Russia. The volume is, therefore, a piece of engaged historiography, whose explicit aim is to understand not only the past but also the present.

The volume contains fourteen chapters which are arranged in four parts: part 1 offers background context (introduction and chapter 1); the second is devoted to the (de)sacralisation and nationalisation of borderlands (chapters 2 to 7); the third outlines *antemurale* discourses (chapters 8 to 12); and the fourth provides reflections on the bulwark myths that persist today (chapters 13 and 14). As the introductory notes state, the bulwark myths have much to do with boundaries, which are conceived, following Georg Simmel, not as spatial facts with sociological consequences, but a sociological fact that forms itself spatially (p. 8). They are also associated with imagined present or future threats, which stem from real past threats (p. 7). What also interests the authors is the interrelation of politics and religion, which found (and still finds) expression in the bulwark ideology.

In chapter 1, Kerstin Weiand traces the beginnings of the *antemurale* concept back to fifteenth-century Italy and the reactions of some intellectuals,

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like Enea Silvio Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II), to the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. The author stresses that the early practice of drawing mental borders in Europe was closely connected to the Catholic church and served a positive purpose in terms of building unity and coherence. Weiand subsequently describes the creation and development of the *antemurale* mythology in Poland (and to some extent in Hungary) in the context of struggles against the knights of the Teutonic Order, and later Turks and Tartars, which led to the creation of a mental bulwark against all Others, including Protestants, in Poland. The author stresses the conflict-provoking impact of that bulwark mythology, without naming it confessionalisation, as it should be determined appropriately.

The second part opens with chapter two by Ciprian Ghisa, who looks at an example of an internal *antemurale*, which divided the two main Romanian churches in Transylvania in the eighteenth century. The Uniate Church, created at the end of the previous century, and dominant in this region under Austrian rule, faced a radical challenge from the growing confidence of the local Orthodox church, which was supported from the outside by Serbian monks. The author delves into the bulwark rhetoric in the ecclesiastic writings of the epoch, concluding that both sides ultimately found themselves fraternised thanks to the external threat coming from the Hungarian nationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 3, by the co-editor Heidi Hein-Kircher, is devoted to the mythology of the Polish bulwark in Lviv (Lwów, L'viv), the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional capital of Austrian-ruled Galicia, as reflected in city travel guides published in the autonomous era (from 1870) and later. The rhetoric of *antemurale* was expressed in the myth of the city as both a defender against threats from the East (mainly from Tartars and Cossacks) and a place that had been (and somehow remained) 'always faithful' to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The rhetoric was further strengthened in the interwar period, after the Polish-Ukrainian struggle of 1918 over the city. Though different parts of the travel guides provide material for the author's argument (passages describing places worth seeing or the architectural styles epitomising the city), it is the introductory chapters outlining the history of the city that are of real value here. The role of the city archivist Aleksander Czołowski is mentioned, though his surname is confused with that of Józef Chołodecki, another local patriot.

In chapter 4, Jürgen Heyde positions the phenomenon of the Jewish ghetto within the *antemurale* imaginary. Based on case studies of the Jewish districts in Frankfurt/Main and Cracow, along with the famous 'ghetto' in Venice after 1516, the author concludes that the term in question was attractive for both the Christian and Jewish sides, as it was not stigmatised but remained open to interpretation. In the nineteenth century, however, and later in the 1930s, it was increasingly stigmatised. Drawing on political discussions in Austrian

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Galicia, Heyde shows how this concept acquired new meanings associated with isolation and backwardness as a result of the activities of the increasingly strong Zionist movement, before being redefined by the assimilationists at the beginning of the twentieth century and coming to act as a label for the Zionist policy itself.

Chapter 5 by Kerstin J. Jobst outlines how the myth of Crimea has been depicted in Russian historiography and culture from the annexation of the peninsula in the eighteenth century until today. The author argues that Crimea, imagined as an Oriental and only partly Slavic region until the mid-nineteenth century, acquired not only new sentimental but also national meanings after the Crimean War. The strongest motives were religious ones, as Crimea was presented as the supposed site of the baptism of the Grand Prince of the Rus', Vladimir/Volodymyr. The topicality of the whole issue is also emphasised, as the paper starts by mentioning the recent (re)annexation of the peninsula by Russia in 2014.

Chapter 6, penned by co-editor Liliya Berezhnaya, presents the *antemurale* mentality that prevailed in the monasteries located in the borderlands, which often turned into ideological battlefields. Here, in the case of Pochaiv Lavra in Volhynia (formerly Uniate, later Orthodox monastery), the Basilian Fathers Monastery of the Nativity of Christ in Zhovkva (Galicia) and the Orthodox Holy Dormition Monastery in Bakhchisarai (Crimea), the religious and national ideals were, the author argues, virtually inseparable. It was, for example, the monks of the Pochaiv Lavra who supported the rise of mature nationalistic rhetoric around 1900. The last chapter in this part, by Zaur Gasimov, is perhaps least connected with the rest of the book. It describes the ideas spread in the post-war period by Turkish and Turkic intellectuals on the Soviet Union. They were often people who had migrated to Istanbul and imagined Turkey to be an anti-Soviet bulwark. Here the context of the twentieth century and Cold War is central, while the religious aspects of the bulwark rhetoric are less evident.

The third part opens with an elaborate essay by Volodymyr Kravchenko about the place of Ukraine in Russian historiography. The author focuses on the issue of how the historical distinctiveness of the Ukrainian/Little-Russian ethnicity was conceptualised in Russian historiography. He also explores why a more permanent *antemurale* ideology failed to emerge, arguing that this was because of the entanglement of Ukrainian history with the myth of Kyivan Rus' as the cradle of the Rus' world. It was only with the demise of the broader Little-Russian idea (which considers the territories of present-day Ukraine as an integral part of the Russian Empire) that a new ideology of the Ukrainian separateness emerged, as was conceived by the Ukrainian historian Mikhailo Hrushevskyi at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Chapter 9 by Philipp Hofeneder examines Polish and Ukrainian history textbooks in Galicia within the broader context of the creation and circulation of schoolbooks in this Austrian province. He convincingly illustrates how

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translators could alter the content of a book. The case of Ivan Matiiv's translation of a Polish schoolbook penned by Anatol Lewicki shows how the historical role of the Cossacks could be emphasised through minor changes in the Ukrainian text. Chapter 10, by Steven Seegel, addresses the topic of mapmaking in the first half of the twentieth century. After a rather elaborate introduction, the author presents examples of maps prepared by four men who promoted the glory of their respective nations: the Austrian Albrecht Penck, the Pole Eugeniusz Romer, the Ukrainian Stepan Rudnytskyi and the Hungarian Pál Teleki. Employing the chosen scope of the maps, as well as their graphic media, tools and texts, the various cartographic projects are interpreted by Seegel as sources of national imaginaries, which are often coupled to bulwark imaginaries, as different lands and populations were depicted as familiar or alien, safe or threatening, in various, to some extent predictable, colours on the maps.

The following chapter by Paul Srodecki outlines the debates of the Polish and Hungarian Christian Right after 1918, where the Soviet state was presented as a menace to both bulwark nations. Right-wing activists in these states, convinced of the danger posed by the Bolsheviks as a result of the historical events of the Polish-Soviet war of 1919–1920 and the Red Terror in Hungary in 1919, made widespread use of the *antemurale* topos as a political and religious (messianic) ideology. The last chapter in this part, by Stephen M. Norris, presents the brilliant tale of one painting, the *Warriors* by Viktor Vasnetsov from 1898. Norris shows that it was thanks to its bulwark-related and mythological potential that this piece of historicist art ensured its long career, likewise during the Stalinist era and later on. The author adds that the bulwark myth could only be sustained if it was continuously invoked (p. 334). Polish art historians might be somewhat confused by the assertion that there is a lack of scholarly literature on the works of great patriotic painters of that time (including Matejko or Alphonse Mucha). In fact, Matejko's oeuvre has been analysed in detail. It is enough to mention Krzysztof Rumiński's 1998 book, *Bildende Kunst, Politik und Geschichtsbewußtsein in Polen*.

The last two chapters offer some final remarks and conclusions. In his paper, Pål Kolstø dwells on the current state of *antemurale* myth-making in Belorussia, Ukraine, and Georgia vis-à-vis Russia, concluding that this sort of thinking has always emerged in the borderlands of civilisations (in the plural, as in the writings of Samuel Huntington). In a further contribution, Paul Srodecki links the discussions to the current situation in his sociological-political contribution.

All the authors of this ambitious undertaking show how many of the *antemurale* myths evolved into national ones and how the religious topoi of the *antemurale* changed into political myths from the eighteenth century onwards. The studies make clear that identities are always relational and connected to the phenomenon of the 'Other'. The volume outlines how bulwark myths

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are connected both to the specificity of a nation and to dangers coming from neighbouring groups. There are also cases where a bulwark could imagine being threatened from two directions, such as interwar Poland. As in the case of many other edited volumes, the authors present different historiographic interests and put emphasis on a variety of issues, but the central topic of *antemurale* and national myths is clearly presented. However, it is disputable whether all of the described issues and phenomena should be categorised as bulwark (*antemurale*) ideals and myths. This doubt stems from the fact that bulwark myths, rhetoric and ideology can be traced almost everywhere in national discourses in the region in question. It was one of key pillars of national(istic) thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which based on the simple psychological practice of 'Othering', i.e. setting apart two (or more) communities: the one we belong to and alien ones. That results in the whole phenomenon being somewhat too general as it applies to a large array of events and opinions. Nevertheless, the editors and authors have provided a significant contribution to knowledge by developing a convincing theory of the early modern *antemurale* ideals and their transformation into modern nationalistic bulwark thinking. I am not convinced, though, that this necessarily applies only to the political right, as the authors seem to suggest.

The rampart tradition remains evident today, as the authors strongly emphasise. However, its symptoms can be seen not only in the debates arising from the recent worrying events in Eastern and Central Europe. The heritage of this tradition is likewise reflected in the often inadequate social awareness of the history and culture of the neighbouring countries in Europe. In this respect, the volume is an outstanding piece of scholarship as it offers a glimpse beyond the rampart to readers from this part of the continent and beyond. It makes clear the immense complexity of the task of legitimising the presence and depicting the role of particular nations in this part of Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth century. This often involved, as the volume's concluding reflections suggest, depreciating and bedevilling neighbouring states or nations while glorifying the role of one's own – or present it as a victim. Readers from particular countries can thus learn that manifestations of *antemurale* were not particular to their nation but rather a transnational and indeed transregional phenomenon.

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Felicia Roşu, *Elective Monarchy in Transylvania and Poland-Lithuania, 1569–1587*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017, 216 pp., bibliog., index, ills., maps

The thesis that underpins much modern historiography of state and society in the post-medieval world is that Europe has long been – and is perhaps irreversibly divided into – two tightly-knit but none the less not entirely compatible parts. According to this theory, at some point in their pasts, the East and the West entered very different paths of socio-economic and cultural development. One of the most evident consequences has been a polarisation and separation in the sphere of political theory and political practices. However, despite the weight of this almost universally endorsed and rarely challenged assertion, Anglophone scholarship has only ever embarked with reluctance on a systematic and contextualised analysis of political institutions and political culture in the lands stretching to the east of the Oder River, and when it does it proceeds with a considerable degree of caution. Felicia Roşu's book is an important step in the direction of filling the resulting gap in scholarly literature, and it is the more worthy of our attention as – judging by Roşu's publications record – it has been formed by over a decade of research into the politics and constitutions of Eastern European polities.

This concise study of just over 200 pages, including acknowledgements, contents, lists of illustrations and abbreviations, a note on the use of personal and place names, a glossary of terms, a bibliography and an index of persons, places and themes, consists of five clearly-structured and well-argued chapters complete with a sizeable introduction covering eighteen pages and a conclusion of similar length.

The introduction offers an overview of the subject, places it in a broader historical context, surveys pertinent publications and historiographical debates critically and presents some of the author's key arguments and findings. However, specific themes, such as the reception of classical authors in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, classical republicanism, the concept of *monarchia mixta*, the relation between republicanism and liberalism, and the influence on the American constitution of early-modern political systems based on elective rulership, stand out as being of particular importance to Roşu, who discusses them at some length.

Chapter one offers a sketch of social and political structures, the economies, histories and geographies of early-modern Transylvania and Poland-Lithuania in order to examine how royal and princely elections developed from an ad hoc idea into a constitutionally enshrined and much eulogised method of appointing new rulers. Roşu emphasises that despite the seeming similarity, the meaning of the concept of 'free election' in the two polities differed. "For the Transylvanian supporters of the elective solution", she writes, "the main goal was to establish a 'free prince', in other words, one not appointed

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by the Hungarian king or Ottoman sultan. In Poland-Lithuania, where the independence of the polity was not at stake, debates centred on the notion of 'free election', which was defined in at least three ways: first, that the ruler not be determined by inheritance rules but only by the election after the death of the incumbent; second, that he had to accept a set of conditions at enthronement; and third, that all citizens (generally meaning the nobility) should have access to voting" (p. 52).

Chapter two is devoted to the analysis of political campaigning during the *interregna* and in the course of early elections. It focuses on the qualities of candidates for the respective thrones and the key themes present in debates taking place in the run-up to voting. These are discussed under the headings: 'Natives and Foreigners', 'The Jagiellons', 'A Weak King', 'Powerful Neighbours and the Fear Factor', 'Religion' and 'Manliness'. The second and much shorter part of this chapter looks at the 'campaigning tools', that is, political propaganda, bribes, factions and factional jostling, and acts of deception carried out by candidates, their agents and supporters.

Chapter three looks at the voting procedures and voting during the Gyulafehérvár election of 1571 and the Warsaw election of 1575–6, and in particular at both the theoretical and practical aspects of the *nemine contradicente* principle. Roșu's concluding argument seems to be that "Although decisions were theoretically unanimous, the logic of numbers and the *maior pars* seemed even more dominant in Transylvania than in the commonwealth" (p. 127).

Chapters four and five aim to dissect the Henrician Articles, *pacta conventa* and their Transylvanian equivalents to shed new light on the nature of relationship between would-be and elected monarchs on the one hand and their subjects on the other, and on the effect that pre- and post-election agreements between candidates had on princely and royal prerogative and authority. Roșu comes to the conclusion that "Elections significantly enhanced the contractual nature of the relationship between citizens and rulers" (p. 157) and that "What set the Polish-Lithuanian and (from 1613) the Transylvanian electoral contracts apart [from similar pacts elsewhere in Europe] was that they were as explicit and binding as any other type of legal agreement" (p. 158).

Rather than simply summing up her arguments Roșu uses the conclusion to consider elections in Transylvania and Poland-Lithuania "from a more theoretical perspective" (p. 18) and to ponder some of the characteristics of the political discourse in the two polities. She points out that contrary to what we would expect, the ubiquitous, ostensibly republican dialectic praising civic virtues, liberty, self-governance and the natural wariness of the powers that be was not necessarily at odds with political pragmatism and the *raison d'état*.

Roșu's study is unquestionably an ambitious, innovative and well-executed project. It addresses a set of topics hitherto underexplored by modern Western historiography, compares the Transylvanian and Polish-Lithuanian elections and constitutions and considers them alongside contemporaneous political

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systems elsewhere in Europe. It organises and analyses its material thematically rather than chronologically, as in the majority of existing studies on the subject. It also uses a broad range of primary and secondary literature to build a coherent and (mostly) convincing argument.

However, the book has some weaker points, and it is not entirely without flaws. Firstly, on closer scrutiny, it is less ground-breaking than readers familiar with the subject will undoubtedly expect it to be. It certainly offers a fresh look at the elections, but it does not significantly enhance our understanding of the political developments leading up to them by introducing many new or little known facts or sources, or by radically reinterpreting them. Polish historiography in particular has produced a wealth of very thorough studies, which trace the activities of key political players such as Jakub Uchański, Piotr Zborowski or Jan Zamoyski, and which describe in minute detail the proceedings in local, provincial and central assemblies of all kinds. Inevitably, most attempts to revisit the turbulent 1570s and 1580s without bringing in a large body of new material or a set of revisionist ideas are likely to be met with scepticism and dismissed as superfluous.

Secondly, many readers will be disappointed to find that the study is not as systematic and comprehensive as it appears to be at first glance. Roșu explains that "while this book examines aspects of both of Poland-Lithuania's first two elections, it pays particular attention to the second. As the reign of Henry Valois barely went beyond his coronation, Stephen Báthory was the first elected Polish-Lithuanian king who actually governed his voters" (p. 2). "The third Polish-Lithuanian interregnum, which ended with another double election and eventually the coronation of Sigismund III Vasa in December 1587, is not discussed at length in this book, but some of its debates and general patterns – characteristic for the early elective period – are included in the analysis" (p. 3).

Thirdly, while, given the enormous size of the subject, it is unreasonable and unfair to expect the author to cover every aspect of royal and princely elections in Transylvania and in Poland-Lithuania and generally tie up every loose end, it does feel that certain important and highly relevant themes are either left out or discussed too briefly or too superficially. These include the notion of civic duty and the common good, the concept of popular sovereignty, the right to resist the monarch, the problem of political patronage and clientelism and the long history of the *electio viritim*. Frustratingly for a historian of political thought and political culture, the fifteenth-century privileges and immunities of the *szlachta* and the Execution Movement, the stepping stones to the later developments including the royal elections, are largely overlooked.

The book is generally free from editorial errors, but a few slips are bound to ruffle the feathers of the meticulous reader. One of them is the apparent inconsistency in referencing primary sources. For example, Roșu uses both

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the 1733 English translation and the original Latin edition of Goślicki's celebrated treatise *O senatorze doskonałym* without an obvious need to do so. The same applies to Modrzewski's *O naprawie Rzeczypospolitej* – in the book we find both the Polish edition of 1857 (replaced in 1953 by a more accurate translation) and the 1554 Latin version. Finally, the text of some of the principal acts such as *Konfederacja generalna warszawska 1587* or *Deklaracya artykułu de non preastanda oboedientia* is taken from *Volumina Legum* rather than from the superior recent edition of Polish constitutional documents (*Volumina Constitutionum*, ed. Stanisław Grodziski, vol. 2, part 2, Warszawa, 2008, pp. 26 and 380 respectively).

Despite its few imperfections, Felicia Roşu's book is a vital contribution to the study of royal and princely elections in Transylvania and Poland-Lithuania and the two political systems in general. Historians and political scientists will no doubt find it very useful, and it deserves to feature soon in the bibliographies and reading lists of lecture courses and academic modules on eastern and central Europe and on the history of political thought and political practices in the early modern world.

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Jan Trynkowski, *Polski Sybir. Zesłańcy i ich życie. Narodziny mitu* [Polish Exile-Settlers in Siberia: The Birth of a Myth], Wydawnictwo Neriton, Instytut Historii PAN, Muzeum Historii Polski, Warszawa, 2017, 470 pp., index of persons

The author is doubtlessly one of the present-day's most eminent scholars studying the history of Poles – basically, Polish exiles – in Siberia, on a par with the excelling experts in Polish-Siberian history: Wiktoria Śliwowska and Antoni Kuczyński. In contrast to them, Trynkowski has had no sizable monographs on the topic in question to his credit yet;[1] instead, he owes his deserved notedness to short forms such as articles and commentaries to historical sources. He has published several articles since the early 1990s. Many of them are hard to come by today; dispersed, they cannot render a complete picture of the author's thought and interests. Taken together, they would demonstrate the enormity of the effort he has made over the last thirty years.

Studies regarding Western Siberia have tended to appear more frequently in the Polish publishing market in recent years.[2] It is hard to explain whether

[1] Wiktoria Śliwowska, *Ucieczki z Sybiru* (Warszawa, 2005); Antoni Kuczyński, *Syberia. Czterysta lat polskiej diaspory: antologia historyczno-kulturowa* (Warszawa and Wrocław, 1995).

[2] Swietłana Mulina, *Migranci wbrew swej woli. Adaptacja zesłanych powstańców*

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this is a matter of coincidence, the authors'/readers' real interests, or the area's distance to Poland. I personally am sure that the fates of the Poles in Eastern Siberia are no less interesting than those in the Trans-Baikal region.

With new documents used, new interpretations proposed, and a new approach to already-known sources and materials, the study under review is undoubtedly important to professional historians but is recommendable also to readers without considerable knowledge on the Polish deportees. It is the latter group that would accept the author's explanation, presented in a series of articles, of the difference between Siberia rendered into Polish as *Syberia* (the geographic territory) and Siberia referred to as *Sybir*: a "mythologised area, land of exile" (section 'The Polish *Sybir* – a mythologised space: a sorting-out attempt. Agaton Giller's Siberian bulwark').

The book is composed of twenty-six articles, in three sections: 'Everyday life in Siberia'; 'Agaton Giller'; and, 'Others'.

The subtitle makes the reader aware that the texts contained in the volume place the main emphasis on the everyday life of Polish deportees; in parallel, the author is aware of the bulk of myths accumulated around it. Can one de-mythologise the *Sybir*? The exercise would be hard to manage, for such Syberian myths are deeply rooted in our consciousness and, besides, reinforced by writers and poets[3] as well as painters (Jacek Malczewski, Aleksander Sochaczewski, Artur Grottger). During the last two centuries, an image of the Polish exile was ingrained in our national awareness: a dirty, hungry and ailing man, only kept alive by the idea of returning home someday and resuming the fight against the tsarist regime. The reality, however, often turned out immeasurably different. First of all, many an exile would die on the transport route (at one of its 'stages', i.e. sections), or after they reached Siberia. The journey oftentimes lasted several months, and the conditions the deportees had to cope with were derogatory. Two examples are recalled: Agaton Giller, who made all his way handcuffed, chained to an iron rod, and Stanisław Szumski, who was led to Siberia in a separate cart, together with his team of servants. The author obviously explains that a vast majority of the

styczniowych na Syberii Zachodniej, transl. into Polish by Marta Głuszkowska and Michał Głuszkowski (Warszawa, 2017); Wiesław Caban and Jacek Legieć (eds.), *Kościół katolicki w Syberii Zachodniej w XIX i początkach XX wieku. Szkice historyczne, materiały, dokumenty* (Kielce, 2017); Wiesław Caban, Krzysztof Latawiec, Jacek Legieć, and Tatiana Mosunowa, *Zesłańcy postyczniowi na Syberii Zachodniej w opinii rosyjskiej administracji i ludności syberyjskiej*, Part 2: *Pamiętniki, listy, publicystyka, początki rosyjskich badań nad losami polskich zesłańców postyczniowych na Syberii* (Kielce, 2019); also, the other books published as part of the grant *Polish Exiles in Western Siberia in the Second Half of the Eighteenth and in the Nineteenth Centuries as Seen by the Russians and Siberian Locals*.

[3] Zofia Trojanowiczowa, *Sybir romantyków* (Kraków, 1992).

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exiles could be classed, type-wise, somewhere between Giller and Szumski. Their examples show, however, how easy it might be to fall into extremes, which at times also happens with professional historians. Trynkowski warns, in a number of essays that even researchers studying Siberia yield to a myth that informs their work, be it in their selection of research subjects-matters. There is no coincidence in the fact that a number of *terrae incognitae* remain in Polish Siberian studies. There are no reliable studies yet on matrimonies entered into by exiles (particularly in the inter-insurrection period) with Russian women, or regarding the histories of their wives who remained in Poland and would often look for a new husband. The sources telling us about favouring Polish exile elites by administrators of Siberian factories and plants (among them, Ivan Efimov, head of a distillery in Alexandrovsk) remain still unused.

The book is thoroughly provocative and tries to make the reader aware of how easy it is to get a distorted image of the Siberian exile. Let me give an example: the title 'Coffee cream, or, the daily life at the route-stage' marks an article that explains that the excellent conditions enjoyed by nineteen Polish deportees who during seventy-six days of their march from Irkutsk to Trans-Baikal ate, inter alia, 473 kg of beef, 428 kg of rye flour, 32 kg of butter, 320 eggs, not to mention fowl and omul fish, were better than the average. Official documents reported on their 'stage' as being identical to the other 'trips' to Siberia. However, based on detailed documentation prepared by Piotr Borkowski, we can tell for sure where the deportees' money came from and in what ways they spent it at the 'stage'.

Rather than seeking to portray the exile to Siberia in terms of an idyll, bucolic tale or exciting adventure, Trynkowski clearly points to the fact that most of the deportees suffered from loneliness and found adaptation to the new condition highly problematic. No surprise at all: they were mostly young people (aged thirty-one, on average) who would get all the way to Siberia, sentenced to perpetual *katorga* and with a ban on returning home; they would oftentimes be sentenced to do hard labour. The process of their adaptation in Siberia was strictly connected with getting to know the aboriginal peoples ('Polish exiles facing the autochthonic peoples of Trans-Baikal area'). Here again, the author shows that one should avoid generalised statements that every Pole when in Siberia tried to make friends with the autochthonic peoples in the way Wacław Sieroszewski or Edward Piekarski did (exile researchers, admired by the Yakuts till this day). The aforesaid article clearly explains that a considerable number of Poles took no interest in the native dwellers (Julian Glaubicz Sabiński), while others treated them as secondary people, "a chain linking an orang-utan and humans" (Maciej Łochwicki on the Buryats), though there were such who paid them homage and sincerely admired them (as Michał Gruszecki, in respect of Evenks and Orochon). Again, generalising may lead one down a blind alley.

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Trynkowski's articles remain topical – one example being a description of the celebration of Polish Constitution Day, May 3rd, in Siberia by Julian Sabiński. Although his diary was published ten years ago and is commonly known among historians, and even translated into Russian, the popular mode adopted by the author causes that the Polish deportee's memoirs have been complemented and supplemented. It is moreover worth emphasising that the article comprises sections from the diary otherwise unavailable in the book format.

Agaton Giller is discussed in as many as six essays. In some of them, it is remarked at the outset that there is now a number of elaborations on Giller's life and activities,[4] yet they still call for further in-depth research. There are many unedited sources still available. The focus is, partly, on the Łomża years of Giller, i.e. the years 1846 – 9, virtually neglected by scholars until now. Furthermore, Trynkowski poses a question of what it was that inspired Giller for writing his 'description of the Trans-Baikal land' (*Opisanie Zabajkalskiej krainy*), proving in a clear manner that the Polish deportee was originally inspired by the poet Wincenty Pol, whose lectures at the Jagiellonian University he had once attended. One source of potential use in studies on the exiles that indeed remains unused are Giller's letters, of which more than two thousand have already been found. It is probably their dispersion throughout different archives and libraries that has discouraged scholars from taking the challenge of editing them. Trynkowski gives us only a sample of Giller's epistolary skills in the form of a few letters kept at the Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences [PAU], plus a letter to Giller from Szymon Tokarzewski, dated 13 June 1866 (the only surviving letter by this author).

Part two includes hard-to-classify articles, of which the last two directly concern the Siberian myths. Again, the author demonstrates how easy it is to be tempted to simplify, generalise, and mythologise Siberia/*Sybir*. At the same time, he emphasises that historians must not ignore the myths unless they affect the research or make it biased. He would himself penetratingly investigate the career of one mythical figure: the fictional status of the Rev. Elizeusz Głębocki was proved over fifty years ago ('The Rev. Elizeusz Głębocki, a capuchin from Uściług: from mystification to a myth). Two articles deal with the 'Dorpat plot', the first showing how easily one can be misled by the investigation commission files implying that the suspect students were never involved in a conspiracy. In fact, members of the 'Karol Hildebrandt' student circle were given a chance to adjust their behaviour while interrogated: what they might say and what they had to keep unsaid. The consistent conduct of all those interrogated caused that the multi-degree conspiratorial

[4] Halina Florkowska-Frančič, *Emigracyjna działalność Agatona Gillera po powstaniu styczniowym* (Wrocław, 1985); Jerzy Fiećko, *Rosja, Polska i misja zesłańców. Syberyjska twórczość Agatona Gillera* (Poznań, 1997).

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structure remained undetected by the investigation officers. The other article describes the involvements of Dorpat University students and graduates in the January Insurrection of 1863–4. Although at least 136 persons took part in the uprising, nobody has yet undertaken in-depth study in this respect, let alone a comparison between the Dorpat students and graduates of other universities or academies.

The book moreover shows some unknown episodes of Polish exile, the paintings of Leopold Niemirowski among them. The inspiration for the author in this respect was an album with more than a hundred drawings, watercolours and lithographs by Niemirowski featuring Eastern Siberia. The book was published in Russia within the Polish-Siberian Library series, and merely a few copies of it are available in Poland, as is the case with some other studies by Russian researchers. Trynkowski's essay on Niemirowski concludes with an appeal to write a reliable monograph of the artist in Poland and hold an exhibition of his works. (Regrettably, such pleas often remain unanswered.)

As Wiktoria Śliwowska and Wiesław Caban remark in the foreword, Trynkowski's articles offer an excellent example of meticulous and conscientious source analysis and devotion with which the scholar approaches the material under analysis. Most of the documents referred to are known, but the author can identify in them specific details previously neglected by the other scholars (p. 8). A good example is a document, presently at the Ossoliński Library, entitled *Accounts of a household run in Siberia in the Nerchinsk district …*, which, though previously mentioned by other authors, is used by Trynkowski in his presentation of the Polish exiles' living conditions. The same is true for Agaton Giller's list of Polish deportees.

All the articles are written in pure Polish; each of them covers a separate issue, though in some of the articles, their form cannot give an exhaustive answer to the questions posed. Elimination of the repetitions would require thorough re-edition of a considerable proportion of the texts. The reading leaves one unsatisfied: it is regrettable that Jan Trynkowski has not decided to write a monograph on one of the problems summarised in his book – which otherwise is an excellent remedy that helps to de-mythologise the *Sybir* and the life of Polish exiles in Siberia.

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Elwira Wilczyńska, *Diabli z czubami. Niemcy oczami polskich chłopów w XIX i na początku XX wieku* [Some Devils with Crests. Germans in the Eyes of Polish Peasants in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries], Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar", Warszawa, 2019, 290 pp.

The library of studies on Polish-German relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is enormous. The diplomatic relations, history of armed conflicts, cultural processes in Polish-German borderland, and the ways the two nations looked at each other have been examined and described. Elwira Wilczyńska's book proves that our knowledge has not been completed, at least in the latter aspect. A specific construct has been referred to, in which the concepts of the Poles was overly fuzzy, and the fact that the perception of Germans was quite different for intellectuals, workers, and peasants tended to be neglected. Differences based on geographic situation added to the picture.

The book focuses exclusively on one social group – the largest one, though perhaps the least audible one, in terms of the sources available. It clearly outlines the area of study in terms of geography: the author shines her spotlight on the residents of rural areas of the Great Duchy of Poznań and the Kingdom of Poland, aptly considering their message as representative for the Polish ethnic area. Thereby, she removed herself from the expected difficulty (or, in certain cases, impossibility) in resolving the question of ethnic identity/nationality of dwellers of the ethnic borderland areas – namely, Silesia, Pomerania, Warmia and Masuria – where the regional self-identification was oftentimes of a greater importance than a national or ethnic identification. Also, the purposes behind the study have been precisely determined – the first being an attempt to reconstruct and explain the contents of the peasants' ideas about Germans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, taking into account the dynamism and temporal and territorial changeability of these ideas. The other primary objective was to identify the sources and constituents of the stereotype of the German as reflected in the peasant *imago mundi*.

An ethnologist, folklorist and historian by education, Wilczyńska offers a discussion at the borderline of several disciplines. Her methodological background and clarity of the terms she uses deserve emphasising with respect. She consistently leads the reader through her interpretive and definition-related ideas; while this is at the expense of narrative volubility here or there, such conduct is entirely legitimate in scholarly terms. The publication's structure is intellectually disciplined, driven by references to the specified source material – except for Chapter 1, which analyses the specificity of the stereotype of the German, set in the context of a generally formulated stereotype of 'the Other'/'the Alien'. It is worth noting at this point that recognition of the German neighbourhood, understood not in state-related categories but

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literally – as presence and encounter in the closest vicinity has been almost absent in Polish historiography (the studies by Wojciech Wrzesiński being a remarkable exception) and much more is known about the neighbourhoods with regards to Jews or Gypsies – virtually aliens, image-wise – on the one hand, and Russians or Lithuanians, on the other.

It is for this reason that the subject addressed in this study can be regarded as innovative – though, clearly, specific threads can be found in earlier publications, such as the study by Kurt Lück (dating to the prewar period), the essay by Jan Stanisław Bystroń, and studies on German settlement in Polish lands. While making adequate use of them, Wilczyńska primarily focuses on the sources which she classes by authorship. She is namely interested in sources of three types: folkloristic, ethnographic, and personal documents (ego-documents); memoirs written by peasants deserve special attention, as far as ego-documents are concerned. Before cataloguing the sources in detail and analysing them, the author builds a reference catalogue of the peculiar traits attributed to Germans by Polish rural dwellers. Compiling such a catalogue in the consecutive sections makes it possible to discuss, in an excellently clear manner, the origins of certain defined stereotypes and the image of the German developed on their basis; while also understanding the specified characteristics and the diversity of forms encountered in the portrait of the Poles' western neighbours.

The list of significant features typical of Germans would thus include: identification with the devil; militaristic attitudes; impertinence; pride; dumbness; order and precision; systematicity; elegance; and, foresight or prudence. There are traits as well which would not typically have been associated with this nation: blackness/dirtiness; savage morals; animal anatomic features; cannibalism; hypocrisy; unreliability; and, poverty. While, in fact, not thoroughly astonishing, this catalogue of features can inspire the reflection of how radical was the change in the perception of Germans by Polish peasants resulting from the Second World War. Using a figurative language, the 'devil' [Polish, *diabeł*], often encountered in countryside people's concepts, rather harmless and dishevelled, turned in several places – in rural as well as urban areas of Poland – into a 'Gestapo-man' or 'SS-man', a genuine incarnation of evil. This experience, in turn, created a room for a virtually unconditioned acceptance and adoption of the narrative whereby (in summary) "Since time eternal, for Poles, Germans are infernal" [*Jak świat światem, nigdy Niemiec Polakowi bratem*].

How false the narrative is – undoubtedly as regards the ideas originated in the peasant world – is convincingly demonstrated by Elwira Wilczyńska's research. What it moreover shows is how insignificant, in the peasant perceptions of the time, was anything related to national/ethnic identification. The world described in the book is still one before nationalism(s) expanded; an environment where nationality (ethnicity) is something distant, abstract, not-quite-differentiating for countryside dwellers. The factors that divided

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the people included language, customs and mores, differences in civilisation standards, and, first and foremost, religion. Hence, for a Polish peasant, the German was, primarily, a dissenter, heretic; a '*luter*' [colloquial of 'Lutheran']. This image is, apparently, not homogeneous: in the places where Polish peasants would less frequently come across a German in their vicinity, the 'demonicity' of Germans was getting severer; and, where such encounters were frequent, the otherness oftentimes tended to be set in a comical framework. This is clearly visible, for instance, in several parables featuring Martin Luther – probably the best-known German in the Polish countryside. He is a demon but also, depending on the type of message, a narrow-minded monk or not-too-quick-witted devil; in a word, somebody 'worse', at different levels. In contrast to the Catholic God, the God of the Protestants is 'worse' as well: clearly, a legacy of the Counter-Reformation teachings.

So, the image is (inter)mediated, the teaching of the Catholic Church not being its only fodder. There are some references to Germans functioning within the noble estate, and noblemen tended to see Germans as infidel/schismatic, soldiers wearing an extraordinary uniform, representatives of a world that differed from theirs in civilisation terms, and affluent people. Polish peasants adopted this image for their purpose, which may well illustrate Kazimierz Dobrowolski's cultural precipitation theory. In this particular case, attractiveness of the taken-over content is not to be neglected; the content was in harmony with the peasant *imaginarium* and helped set the surrounding world in an order, according to a simple dichotomous model of 'ours'/'local' vs 'alien'/'other'; 'Catholic' vs 'heretic'; 'good' vs 'bad'. Wilczyńska evidences this excellently, observing the story's chronology, which is of particular importance for illustrating the study's input assumption – namely, to show how a stereotype turned into an image, via the original image getting saturated with the observer's own experience, based on neighbourhood and direct contacts.

The closeness mentioned above is, to a remarkable extent, part of the rural economy's realities. A German was, primarily, the colonist, watched carefully by Polish peasants while working and caring for his farmstead; a 'domesticated' alien, with almost no demonic traits. His diligence and industriousness, honesty and thriftiness are respectable, albeit – as can basically be inferred from the folkloristic sources – these features would not efficiently prevent the innumerable peasant jokes about the neighbour's outright unimaginable foolishness. This slow-wittedness results more from the language barrier and differences in customs/morals rather than is rooted in some specific mental predispositions of the Germans, and it tells us more about the limits of the real encounter between the Poles and the Germans than what those people were really like. If there is hostility or enmity to all that, it would have stemmed from indifference and distance. This image is modifiable, to an extent, based on memoirist sources – particularly those which record the experience of peasant emigration. The admiration for husbandry practised by

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the Germans is at times blended with a sense of exploitation; the *Germanin* is a 'lord' – not much different, as a matter of fact, from the Polish feudal lord.

Analysis of the ethnographic sources brings about interesting conclusions. Seen in their light, the image of the German clearly grows hostile and triggers reluctance, but the question immediately arises: Were the researchers studying Polish countryside areas at the time, and intermediating in the communication, really unbiased in what they once wrote down? The author is wholly disillusioned at this point, stating that those enthusiasts of 'folk things' were often strongly influenced by the national idea, which conditioned their descriptions. Perforce, German could not have been somebody respectable. The method applied by Polish folk-philiacs also raise certain doubts (as is the case with the work done by Kurt Lück, who sympathised with Nazism). Hence the author's finding that the ethnographers' records "document the life in the nineteenth-century Polish countryside and, to no lesser extent, the intellectual life of the period's intelligentsia". This ascertainment helps to understand better the threats implied by analysis of the periodicals such as *Wisła*, *Lud*, or *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*. The author, however, succeeds to precisely separate what is genuinely folk, or people's, from what merely is a reflection of it (sometimes, a distorted one) – and this is another strong point of the study under review.

A further conclusion to be drawn is that the image of (the) Germans as Polish peasants saw them was no monolithic at all. It was, instead, variable by time and territory, reflecting what was familiar and shared, and what was individual and based on direct contact. There is a great deal of stereotypical perception of the 'Other' ('Alien') – mostly in the folkloristic sources – but elements of what was 'specifically German' are identifiable as well. The author did take the trouble to read and analyse many sources, diverse as they are, as she did it reliably and honestly, with no resentments whatsoever. It makes her book an excellent point of departure for a comparison of the image of the Germans living next to their Polish peasant neighbours in borderland areas or ethnically ambiguous territories. A great merit of Elwira Wilczyńska is that she has made the reader better acquainted with the imaginary of the peasant world. Peasants still tend to be not-quite-well visible in studies and research, and their voice is not really heard, actually – which is certainly not the case with the study in question, though.

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Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov, *Mówić we własnym imieniu. Prasa jidyszowa a tworzenie żydowskiej tożsamości narodowej (do 1918 roku)* [To Speak on Our Behalf. Yiddish Press and the Emergence of the Jewish National Identity until 1918], Instytut Historii PAN and Wydawnictwo Neriton, Warszawa, 2016, 353 pp.

Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov is a professor at the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, a Yiddish scholar, and an expert on Eastern European culture and history, particularly on the Polish, Jewish, and Russian literary-cultural intertextures. Her study deserves attention for several reasons. It consists of three large parts, each divided into three chapters according to a chronological-thematic scheme. Parts one and three play the role of a contextual history of the Yiddish press published in Poland and also of the modern Jewish national identity during the period in question. Part two describes the golden years of the Yiddish press and perhaps also the moment when it took over the role of leader for the 'nationally-minded' Jewish community on an unprecedented scale.

Parts one and two, where the author describes the genesis and also the social roots of the emerging phenomenon of the Yiddish press, bring interesting conclusions. The press is treated here as a medium for social transformations. Taking into consideration the series of imprecisions, understatements, and also ordinary mistakes and distortions functioning in the popular historical awareness, these two parts required the most comprehensive approach: from critical-literary research and contextual biographism, through studies on the elements of mass culture at the turn of the twentieth century, to the detective reconstruction of the history of the Jewish dailies, particularly the leading one – *Haynt*. One could venture a hypothesis that these parts of Nalewajko-Kulikov's work constitute a kind of socio-cultural history of the Jewish public opinion. Without the press, as the author convincingly proves in her work, it is not easy to understand the Polish-Jewish relations during the first half of the twentieth century.

This is not the end of this book's informative qualities. By way of an in-depth analysis of the press discourse – which constitutes this study's main background and something like its documentation base – the author presents the shaping of modern Jewish culture and modern identity of Polish Jews which grew on that foundation. The daily press – notably the mass-circulation one – lets the readers become familiar with mass culture phenomena such as growing commercialization, political involvement, and public opinion polarization. The mass-circulation popular press is also a medium with ambitions to marry high and low culture (particularly noteworthy here is the excellent chapter 'Idealizm i komercja' [Idealism and Commercialism]). *Haynt*, whose publishers proposed a qualitative change on the press market,

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played the most crucial role. The eclectic milieu it associated created not only a periodical of a sensational-popular profile but something like a platform for the emerging Jewish public opinion. Established and run with bravado by energetic newcomers from the territories of today's Lithuania and northern Belarus, the daily became a "self-proclaimed voice of the Jewish community". The idea "that Jews are a nation and that as a nation they have political rights" was promoted predominantly in *Haynt*, which as Nalewajko-Kulikov points out was not only hard to swallow for the Polish public opinion, but also became an actual pretext for the introduction of political anti-Semitism into the centre of Polish public life.

The author, however, was interested in more than the specific newspaper's philological and documentary content but also in the broad context of the Polish-Jewish-Russian Warsaw at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – a city of migrants from the provinces and other parts of Russia. The attention she devoted to the Litvaks' experiences – with this being one of the first comprehensive studies of this social-cultural group – facilitated a verification of the many myths lingering in Polish historiography. One of them, perhaps the most deeply rooted in widespread awareness, is the conviction that the Jewish newcomers from Russia "spoiled the harmonious relations between the Poles and the Jews". However, Alina Cała's studies and also the recent studies penned by Małgorzata Domagalska and Maciej Moszyński have already revealed the shaky foundations of that Polish-Jewish harmony. Nalewajko-Kulikov's work significantly supplements this picture, somewhat from the other direction. The scholar's curiosity and meticulousness have led to the unmasking of some of the myths that have accumulated in the research on the Jewish community of Warsaw during the period in question.

The passages devoted to the First World War, the first months of Poland's independence, and the more broadly emerging post-imperial order in this part of Europe seem to be the slightly less successful fragments of this book, original and pioneering in many respects. Unlike in the previous parts, here, the author narrows down the perspective of her narration. She is interested predominantly in the history of *Haynt*'s editorial staff, and more broadly, in the fate of Yiddish journalists, the press discourse and the editorial policy during that period, and also the Jewish journalist milieu's relations with the Russian and then German authorities, and, last but not least, the shaping of the Jewish political life. The experience of the war as such almost disappears from the foreground, along with a series of phenomena directly or indirectly connected with it: the steadily worsening Christian-Jewish relations along with the outbreak of violent anti-Semitism during the final years of the First World War, and also a whole set of phenomena connected first with the martial law in the Russian Empire and then with the German occupation, which began in 1915: from the mass migration to Warsaw, through the sudden

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pauperization of the Jewish communities, to problems resulting from the worsening social welfare, poverty, and other social problems which had not been known on such a scale.

In the recent years international historiography increasingly often and explicitly takes note of a series of phenomena, processes, and mechanisms during that period, for instance, the character of the violence against Jews and the trauma it caused, which could *ex post* seem a prelude to the tragedy of the First World War.[1] The war is no longer only a great conflict between nations on the front lines, but to an increasing extent also an experience of deprivation of groups, strata, and milieus in every possible dimension. These histories, not fully articulated for the most part, demand to be openly heard and, above all, reflected on and internalized. This social-mental turning point is not visible in Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov's study. It might be present but in the background, or even more profound. The author focuses on the process of the transformation of the Eastern European communities and communities of Polish Jews. She notices numerous different processes and events, many of which have been overlooked by the domestic historiography of the subject, but she describes these phenomena basically from the perspective of the cultural elite. It is a legitimate outlook, somewhat understandable in the case of a scholar associated with the Department of the History of Ideas and the History of the Intelligentsia of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It seems insufficient, however, in the case of this kind of medium, that is, a daily which had various functions and social objectives. The First World War and the post-war period in the history of all inhabitants of the Polish lands require a fresh outlook. The Warsaw historian's study has not fully performed this role.

Even though I do have minor reservations and a different opinion on certain issues I must emphasize that Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov's work is outstanding. It is essential not only for understanding the evolution of the Jewish elites and their ways of thinking and the shaping of the identity discourses in the Jewish community, but also for the future Polish-Jewish relations during the next 50 years, and in certain respects also later. Though for many scholars, the issues that the author is dealing with are of a niche character, this vital

[1] From among the studies devoted to the Polish lands during this period particularly noteworthy are the following two studies published almost at the same time: Robert Blobaum, *A Minor Apocalypse: Warsaw during the First World War* (Ithaca, 2017) and William W. Hagen, *The Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Poland, 1914–1919* (Cambridge, 2018). These are only examples. One of the Polish authors who has emphasized the significance of the First World War and the post-war period is Anna Landau-Czajka, see *eadem*, 'Odrodzona Polska czy odrodzona ojczyzna? Odzyskanie niepodległości w świetle polskojęzycznej prasy żydowskiej 1918–1920', *Dzieje Najnowsze* 3 (2011), 61–3.

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contribution to the Polish-Jewish studies requires careful reading, and many of the theses it formulates – reflection.

The literary qualities of this study should also be emphasised. It is compelling and very skillfully written, with the careful editing along with the matching illustrations only highlighting these qualities. Also, in the layer of the composition the study provides a clear interpretative scheme. The author is not afraid to reveal her skill. She artfully operates both the broad social-cultural panorama and the historical detail. Throughout her text, she does not shun away from telling anecdotes and her heroes' moving biographies in an allusively ironic style. Even though the people she writes about belong to the generation of the founding fathers of the modern Jewish mass culture, the author neither describes them 'on her knees' nor treats them like monuments. She has her sympathies and, less frequent, idiosyncrasies, but her book as a whole is dominated not so much by an attempt to judge certain behaviours as by a general intention to find the motives and inspirations for that first generation of real Jewish intellectuals. Nalewajko-Kulikov skilfully uses the critical apparatus which she developed while working on the studies she published or edited earlier, which constitute something like an introduction to this subject matter.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that this study takes advantage of the vast documentation material published mainly in *Haynt* and other Jewish dailies and the aptly selected archival documentation dispersed around the world. This study fits a broader current of studies devoted to the emergence of the Jewish public space, a catalyst for which was the Revolution of 1905. It also shows the process of the emancipation of the Jewish public opinion from both Polish and Russian influences.

This monograph has been nominated for the prestigious First Rector of the University of Łódź Professor Tadeusz Kotarbiński Award for an outstanding scholarly work in the field of the humanities, the City of Warsaw Public Library Award, and other ones too. First and foremost, however, it has been awarded the first-degree award in the first edition of the Gierowski and Shmeruk Award for outstanding works in the field of Jewish studies which is given by the Jewish Studies Institute of the Jagiellonian University and the Maria Skłodowska-Curie University. For over a decade the author has belonged to the small yet very active – both intellectually and organisationally – milieu of Polish Jewish studies. Nowadays, these studies are deeply rooted both in the deepened philological and historical technique. These works are very often a result of discussions with other disciplines. Many scholars from this field – Nalewajko-Kulikov is a good example here – are in their element when it comes to the broader spectrum of international Jewish studies.

The high praise this book has received lets one hope that it will be read not only in the hermetic circle of Jewish studies or in the equally hermetic milieu of press historians or historians of the intelligentsia as a cultural group, but

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also among all those who study the Polish twentieth century experience in depth and are willing to face it critically. It seems that some time is needed before the figures as grand as Avrom (Abraham) Goldberg, Noyekh Finkelstein, and predominantly Shmuel Yankev Yatskan (Jackan), to name but a few of the book's protagonists, enter the twentieth century history of Poland on equal rights. However, a major step in this direction has been made.

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Elisabeth Haid, *Im Blickfeld zweier Imperien. Galizien in der österreichischen und russischen Presseberichterstattung während des Ersten Weltkrieges (1914–1917)*, Herder-Institut für historische Ostmitteleuropaforschung – Institut der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft, Marburg, 2019, 296 pp.; series: Studien zur Ostmitteleuropaforschung, 43

The Austrian historian undertook to analyse about a dozen periodicals issued during 1914–17 in the capitals of two empires which fought on opposite sides of the conflict, that is, the Habsburg Empire and the Romanov one. It seems that Haid rightly imposed a chronological framework from 6 August 1914 to the turn of October and November 1917. The choice of 1917 as the caesura seems obvious – that year was an important one because, unlike in the earlier years, during the revolution in Russia, there were more urgent topics than Galicia. What is more, in the light of the press the course of events in 1918 concerned a group of entirely different urgent problems of a political nature, often about the dissolving parts of the monarchy on the River Danube.

The selection of the press titles analysed by the Austrian historian seems highly logical. Intent on giving possibly the broadest depiction of the press narration, Haid juxtaposed various press titles paired according to their political orientation. For instance, to get a picture of Galicia from the conservative perspective, she analysed the Vienna periodical of *Reichpost* juxtaposed with the Petrograd *Novoye Vremya*. Analogously, for the liberal milieus, she selected *Neue Freie Presse* and *Riech'*, while as far as the radical right-wing was concerned, she chose *Ostdeutsche Rundschau* and *Russkoye Znamya*. The socialists are represented only with the Viennese *Arbeiter Zeitung*, as that press profile was banned in Russia at the beginning of the war.

Consequently, the socialist periodicals which emerged during the war were ephemeral and quickly changed their titles. That situation lasted until 1917 when the ban was lifted (as the author emphasises in the introduction while discussing her selection of the primary sources). Haid briefly characterised

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the above titles in the next chapter of her book. She expertly used discourse analysis as the research method, rightly assuming that discourse is something characteristic of every society and that, consequently, the press releases in Petrograd got a wholly different social response than those in Vienna. Thus, Haid's book provides the reader with many interesting reflections about the empires or, in fact, the period of their decline.

The author also undertook to answer several questions which were bothering her. For instance, what was Galicia's function in the press discourse? What were the correlations between the individual functions? To what extent did the created media discourse on Galicia constitute an element of the coverage of the war, the two warring camps' military objectives, and the domestic and political-national debates? What role did the stereotypes of Galicia play in the press narration and to what extent did they acquire a new significance in the context of the ongoing war? To what extent was Galicia's function used in the propaganda? What then were the consequences of the limitations resulting from censorship?

The author divided her reflections into six main parts, which correspond with the book's structure. First comes the introduction, which constitutes the first chapter, where Haid presents her research method, research problems, and sources. In the second chapter, the author discusses Galicia's historical context as the moot point during the period preceding the First World War, that is, the shaping of the political sentiments before the outbreak of the war and the region's significance in the two empires' foreign policy. Supplemented with a characteristic of the national problems in Galicia, these reflections introduce the reader into the specificity of the region situated on the border between two cultures. The author then moves on to a very synthetic discussion of the military operations on that territory. The description of the military operations, relatively important for the eastern front of the First World War, could seem too synthetic, but this does not constitute a reservation, since this topic is not the main theme of this publication, while the propaganda motifs for both sides, derived directly from Galicia as the battlefield, are used later in the book. The author very skilfully combines the military themes with the political use of Galicia in the two empires' propaganda narration.

Chapter three discusses general conditions of the functioning of the press during the war, focusing on the press published in the two empires' capitals. The author gives a detailed overview of the censorship system in Russia and Austria, and also presents their similarities and differences. Haid clearly points to the year 1917 as a breakthrough in the history of wartime censorship – in the case of Russia it was due to the revolution and the permission for the publication of liberal press beginning with April that year. In Austria's case, it was a time of a reorganisation of censorship, which was supervised by the War Surveillance Office (*Kriegsüberwachungsamt*) – an organisation established at the beginning of the war which led to the end of the 'wartime absolutism'

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during Stürgkh's premiership, which the author does mention. Haid also points to the following difference: while the Austrian censorship focused on both military and political issues, the Russian one was concerned mostly with the former. The author asserts that in Austria and Russia press propaganda instruments were used mostly to limit information, that is censorship, meaning the literal cutting out of passages from newspapers and leaving blank spots. She compares these mechanisms with the situation on the western front line, where the propaganda aimed at creation of a suitable vision of reality was more important than restriction of information. The Austrian War Press Office (*Kriegspressequartier*) was a well-organised institution with a large number of individuals from various spheres of culture and art in its orbit. Russia had no such institution, and its propaganda did not move beyond the issue of suitable ordinances and the circulation of reports and correspondence through the Petrograd Telegraph Agency (*Petrogradskoe telegrafnoe agentstvo*) and then the press bureau of the Stavka, that is, the Russian supreme command. One could venture a claim that the Petrograd PTA was Vienna KPQ's counterpart. However, there is no doubt that the Austrian propaganda instruments were more developed, while in Russia, stress was laid on the units of the army command.

In the next, fourth chapter, the author describes the creation of the image of Galicia and its inhabitants in the light of selected press titles. In this way, she answers the question as to how the image of Galicia was created in the Austrian and Russian press and what the term 'Galicia' denoted in the light of the Russian and Austrian press. She clearly emphasises the dichotomy between the representation of Galicia from the Russian and the Austrian perspective and also the different definitions of the term 'Galicia': not as a crown land of the Habsburg monarchy, but as a vaguely marked out territory which had its ethnographic and historical specificity. Using research methods from the field of the history of mentalities, Haid faces stereotypes of Galicia about the correlation between the centre and the periphery, which constitutes an important point of view from Vienna's perspective. From Petrograd's perspective, one can clearly see elements of a territory which had a national character. The author juxtaposes two completely different historical visions of Galicia – the Austrian press claimed that that area was 'proto-Germanic' (*urgermanisches Gebiet*), while the Russian one associated it with Slavdom. The author recapitulates the entire discussion with the vision of Galicia in the light of the press as an 'exotic' and unfamiliar terrain. In both those instances, they were separated from Galicia not only by the distance and physical borders but predominantly with mental borders. In both cases, Galicia was a distant province which nonetheless remained an essential chessboard during the two empires' confrontation.

The author devoted the fifth chapter to military operations in and for Galicia. This clear distinction and formulation of the struggle 'for' Galicia seem

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important from the propaganda perspective as that 'propaganda laboratory' constituted a bargaining chip for the two empires. Hence Galicia remained not only an area of military operations but also a military aim, with these two aspects constituting the topic of this chapter. The struggle was not always waged for a specific territory but predominantly for its population, which was so diverse within the framework of that one region. It was not without a reason that as early as at the beginning of the war, when the Russians seized eastern Galicia and were gradually moving towards Cracow, propaganda appeals were made to win over the population remaining on the territory of war or occupation, mainly the Ukrainians, with those appeals substantiated with the brotherhood of souls between Russians and Galician Ruthenians. The two belligerent empires intended to 'liberate' the nations inhabiting Galicia. Moreover, with Galicia situated between them, they both sought to create a buffer zone. In the course of the war, the 'Galicia' keyword changed its meaning for both players. During the initial period, it was a synonym of victory for Russia often used in the press, which was connected with the actual military situation. Similarly, after the May 1915 Gorlice–Tarnów offensive came a remodelling of the propaganda of success, which was now attributed in the language of the propaganda to the Central Powers' Army – after the summer of 1915 there was an abundance of propaganda articles in the Austrian press in connection with the capture of the Przemyśl fortress and then Lemberg (Lviv), which had remained in the Russian occupier's hands since early September 1914. Using the example of Galicia, the author states that the press successfully performed its role in the case of both empires: it explained the sense of the war waged and gave hope to the population, in that case living in the capitals, for military successes. Haid also shows Galicia as an example of a propaganda struggle of a civilizational character as Russia was fighting for Slavdom, while the Central Powers were fighting for Western culture. That was why, for instance, the Viennese press showed the war atrocities inflicted by the Russian Army, while the actual harm done by the Austro-Hungarian troops stationed in Galicia was overseen. The Russians presented the period of Galicia's occupation as a liberation of the Slavs, which they connected with the Pan-Slavic themes.

While discussing Galicia, which was on the fringe of the Habsburg Empire, one cannot omit the motif of its multinational society, regardless of into which period one is looking. Elisabeth Haid did not oversee these aspects as chapter six of her book discusses Poles, Ruthenians (later defined as Ukrainians), Jews, and Germans in terms of the two empires' wartime policy. Due to the establishment of the Polish Legions as part of the Austrian Army, the press began to make references to the 'Polish cause'. The motive of the Legions was also used to create a propaganda image of a monarchy that protected all its nations, allowing them to form their military units to replenish its army. The fundamental difference between the press published in the two capitals

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pertained to the Legions' impact range and significance. The Russian coverage was limited exclusively to Galicia, while the Austrian ones also encompassed the Kingdom of Poland.

What is more, the Russian press regarded the Legion initiative as a German-Austrian inspiration, where the purported patriotism was to be motivated more by Austrian loyalism than by an understanding of Polish patriotism. Furthermore, the Russian press discredited the handling of the Legions' entire idea by claiming that at its helm stood young, ignorant, and blind patriots. Aside matters connected with the Legions Haid also analyses other aspects of the construction of the image of Poles in the press, such as assessment of the government, activity of the Polish Circle in the Viennese Parliament, functioning of Polish organisations, both in Russia and Austria, their significance during the war, and the change in situation in the Kingdom of Poland, particularly after the Act of 5 November of 1916. As for the Ruthenians, the Austrian press discussed predominantly their purported treacherous attitude towards the Austrian state. The Austrian press also wronged the Ruthenian inhabitants of Galicia by calling them Russophiles. Moreover, it regarded them as gullible peasants and openly wrote about acts of treason and signalling the Russian Army. Haid argues that the image of the Ruthenian in the Russian press seems similar as they were also portrayed as gullible peasants. However, a completely different emphasis was laid on their attitude to the state and the war. While some Austrian periodicals mentioned their loyalty to the Emperor, the Russian press unambiguously emphasised their complete lack of enthusiasm for the war and often presented the Ruthenians' favourable attitude to 'Mother Russia'. As for Jews, the Viennese press made references to their anti-Russian and pro-Austrian attitude and even claimed that they were grateful to Austria for protection. That changed with the worsening food supply throughout the monarchy and in Vienna, when anti-Semitism, paired with a shortage of the bare necessities, caused social antagonisms. The Russian press had a negative attitude to the Jews regarded as traitors and often even agents of the Central Powers. The press also discussed Galician Germans, but they did not play a significant role in the mechanism of the press propaganda on either of the two sides.

In the final, seventh chapter of her book, the author presents Galicia as a symbol of the ongoing war and its consequences. This part presents numerous descriptions of war destructions and other atrocities which were aimed at weakening the enemy in propaganda terms by revealing his barbarities. In this case, both sides used a similar language of narration, with the differences stemming from the specificity of the language and the reporters' creativity. Aside from the propaganda which was used by both sides, one can also notice heroisation and aestheticisation of the war: it was emphasised that the events of the ongoing war were something that Galicia had never experienced. The issue of wartime civilian refugees was also

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discussed by the press, with the Austrian one leading the way as the issue of the refugees from Galicia was mainly Austria's problem. The author refers to these threads by presenting the evolution of the press narration: from sympathy towards the refugees to a campaign against the aliens occasioned by the dire economic situation. The Russian press focused more on the aspects connected with 'its' Ruthenians' flight to Russia after the summer of 1915 and on discussing the unfavourable situation of the refugees in Vienna. The author ends this chapter with an analysis of the press's outlook on the war destructions in Galicia regarded as an opportunity for a modern reconstruction of the country. The destructions were seen as a *tabula rasa* which could be filled with brave new things, particularly in the economic aspect and in terms of the far-reaching reforms in other spheres of life. This completely utopian vision was not popularised equally by all of the Austrian periodicals as some voices associated the war destructions with actual misery and defeat. The narration in the Russian press emphasised the 'brave' and the 'new', particularly during the Russian occupation of Galicia, which – to continue this thread – had finally been freed of the 'Austrian anarchy'. The historian assets that during the period analysed (that is, until 1917) the press narration did not write about the end of Galicia. But that was yet to come as a result of the reaction of the local population exhausted by yet another year of the war.

This book has many strong suits. The reader has to do with a study whose author has mastered the delicate art of press research. This publication is bound to be interesting not only to scholars of Galicia but also to those who wish to learn about the instruments of the First World War press propaganda. The press played a vital role during that period as it constituted the essential source of information which influenced the masses. Well aware of that, the authorities of both empires skilfully used that fact to pursue their policy and achieve their war objectives. The author rightly observes that so far the issue of wartime propaganda has been discussed in the reference literature only concerning the western front line, which takes precedence in the historiography over the war operations in the east.

Consequently, Haid's book provides multiple new research questions which are yet to be answered by historians. The author satisfies the curiosity of all those who in the course of their research have often examined World War I press and noticed the very characteristic blank spots, sometimes even entire paragraphs of varied length cut out. This study teaches the reader about the propaganda mechanisms. Aside from the layer of the research on the press and the propaganda, this book is a fascinating comparative study of imperial policies towards a specific territory, here: Galicia, which was in the orbit of the Russian and Austrian politics.

Despite this book's many virtues, it seems that its bibliography does not include Polish or Ukrainian studies on Galicia during the First World

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War discussing the same issues the author is dealing with. It is no major reservation, however, as it is challenging to be familiar with reference literature in every language. On the other hand, after reading this text, a reader might feel that a question about the readers' reception of the wartime press propaganda has not been fully answered. The role of the wartime propaganda is clearly visible here: the press reports constituted the sender's achievement of a specific objective and often manipulation of the receivers, that is, the press readers. The sender was guided by the state apparatus, not necessarily as the direct author of the given text, but also as the censor who cut out the appropriate parts and often had an influence on the context of the message as a whole. Consequently, the receiver was manipulated while the objective expected was achieved: the receiver's vision of the situation matched the censor's intention. The former was also orally disseminated after it had been picked up from the press. Haid skilfully presented those processes pointing to the role of the propaganda, but the study as a whole calls for a reflection on and comparison of the press releases with the personal documents from that epoch where the witnesses to the events describe the reality emerging from the press as compared with the reality they saw with their own eyes.

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Włodzimierz Mędrzecki, *Kresowy kalejdoskop. Wędrówki przez Ziemie Wschodnie Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej 1918–1939* [Kaleidoscopic Borderlands. Journeys through the Eastern Lands of the Second Polish Republic, 1918–1939], Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków, 2018, 424 pp., bibliog., index, ills.

Professor Włodzimierz Mędrzecki is a historian and political scientist at the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences. His work spanning over four decades has already won recognition, with the author receiving the award of *Przegląd Wschodni* for one of his earlier books. The book under review, *Kaleidoscopic Borderlands. Journeys through the Eastern Lands of the Second Republic 1918–1939*, won first prize in the KLIO Prize of the Polish Association of History Books Publishers in November 2018. Focused on the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic, this is not the first study of the region in terms of geographical scope. However, it is an outstanding one in terms of methodological breadth. Its highly elegant, clear and accessible style makes reading this book a pleasure. Mędrzecki's unwavering commitment to a critical approach is evident here as it has been throughout his career.

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The book is lavishly illustrated by many carefully selected photographic images of interwar town markets, cities, towns, village street views, family portraits, etc. The illustrations complement the narrative rather than distract the reader. This works especially well for a younger generation of readers who more willingly expose themselves to the advances of the visual culture. The author cites many secondary sources and existing literature on the subject, thus paying homage to fellow historians (p. 13).

The present book is an example of an interdisciplinary approach to historical studies known as *historia integralna* (integral history) in Polish. Mędrzecki thus continues the traditions of the school of social history represented by Janusz Żarnowski, Jan Molenda and many others. This well-conceived and carefully crafted book walks a fine line between an entertaining popular reading and serious scientific monograph. Still, in his foreword Mędrzecki asks readers to treat this monograph only as an introduction to research questions that require further inquiries (p. 15).

The author also humbly recognises that while literature in Belarusian and Ukrainian is available and accessible to Polish scholars who study interwar history, the language barrier is a severe obstacle for researchers from Poland interested in Lithuanian literature on the subject. Only through translations into English are Polish (and non-Polish) scholars able to have at least a partial access to current debates in Lithuanian historiography (pp. 14–15). However, the previous decade saw an attempt at cooperation between the Polish and Lithuanian scholars in order to present a shared view of Lithuania's past.[1]

The target audience of the monograph is, of course, the Polish readership, but the message of the book will not be lost on readers outside Poland. However, translations into Belarusian and Ukrainian languages are needed, for the book's message to be communicated effectively to significant audiences outside Poland. This could stimulate further fruitful discussions in the neighbouring countries, establishing new ties and shaping existing relations between scholars. Mędrzecki's monograph both summarizes existing research and opens a new chapter, as any good academic study should.

Mędrzecki insists that the myth of borderlands (*kresy*) is a separate issue and thus not the subject of his monograph (p. 9). While he recognises the importance of the term *kresy* in the title of the book, he, in fact, opts for *pogranicze*[2] paradigm rather than *kresy*, even if both are often rendered into English as *borderlands*. The former denotes coexistence (however peaceful) of

[1] Andrzej Rachuba, Jūratė Kiaupienė, and Zigmantas Kiaupa, *Historia Litwy. Dwugłos polsko-litewski* (Warszawa, 2009).

[2] Elżbieta Smułkowa, 'Wokół pojęcia pogranicza. Wschodnie i Zachodnie pogranicze Białorusi w ujęciu porównawczym', in Elżbieta Smułkowa and Anna Engelking (eds.), *Pogranicza Białorusi w perspektywie interdyscyplinarnej* (Warszawa, 2007), 5–14.

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different ethnicities and religions in the eastern parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth throughout its history and beyond. The latter instead prioritizes the Polish view of these territories as integral parts of Poland. While opting for *pogranicze*, the author does not neglect the contribution Poles made to the history, culture, the arts, education, economy and legal traditions of these lands (pp. 16–39).

As the title of the book suggests, it attempts to draw a picture of the borderlands' interwar history that includes all significant issues related to the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic. As the author notes in his foreword, the emphasis in this book is on modernization (p. 13). However, it would be a crude oversimplification to suggest that the narrative merely switches from stories of violence and oppression to that of modernization or nostalgia for a long lost borderland (*kresy*) arcadia. The author's skill ensures that the narrative of the book flows smoothly. The structure of the book combines both geographical and problem-oriented approaches. Mędrzecki begins his analysis with Lwów (Lviv) and Eastern Galicia and then proceeds northwards to Volhynia, Polesie, the city of Wilno (Vilnius), and then to the Wilno and Nowogródek voivodeships.

The author depicts ambivalent social and economic developments in the eastern lands, but the conclusion Mędrzecki draws for north-eastern territories is particularly negative (pp. 353–4). Famine and crop failures in the north-eastern voivodeships (pp. 347–53) were scourges for local populations and authorities. This remained a serious problem until the late 1930s. However, many inhabitants of poverty-stricken rural areas of the northeast went abroad seeking low-skilled jobs as seasonal agricultural labourers. This often enabled them not only to make ends meet but also to purchase industrial goods and foodstuffs (pp. 341–2). The interwar years also saw the development of local cottage industries (p. 345). Still, most of the industrial goods and building material were imported from other regions of Poland (pp. 345–6) and medieval agricultural practices such as the three-field system persisted among the peasants of the north-eastern voivodeships (p. 375) almost until the very end of the interwar era.

The economic recovery after the great depression started in earnest only in 1936, which saw an increase in investment activities in which local enterprises, large landed estates and business also had a share (pp. 356–7). Tourism began to play a role in the local economy, which was seen as a way of potentially lifting the north-eastern lands out of poverty (p. 356). Nonetheless, radical measures and a large amount of investment, including infrastructural spending were required to transform the socioeconomic structure and social and economic relations of these territories, while raising the standard of living in rural areas. The government had insufficient funds to address these problems and indeed had other priorities (pp. 354–6). Lwów and Eastern Galicia also experienced serious difficulties during the economic downturn

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of the great depression (pp. 164–73) which exacerbated social tensions in the city and the region in general, contributing to the rise of nationalist and radical politics (pp. 113, 156–61).

Mędrzecki states that violence perpetrated by both Polish and Ukrainian nationalists or communists against the state apparatus and some particular ethnic or religious group (often Jews) was limited in scope but nevertheless effective in destroying the good neighbourly relations between various ethnic and religious communities. Although violence was an instrument limited to an active minority of radicals, its effects were destructive. Violence became routine in East-Central Europe both during and in the wake of the Great War.[3] Anti-Jewish violence was also increasingly becoming routine (pp. 108–9, 135). Its outbreaks took place during both the time of war (pp, 55–6, 107–8) and relatively peaceful interwar decades (pp. 126, 128–9, 136–8, 281, 284–7, 284–91, 329–30).

Outside urban areas 'local-mindedness' (*tutejszość*) as a phenomenon existed in both Eastern Galicia (pp. 177–83) and the north-eastern voivodeships (pp. 358–9). It was a kind of a *Weltanschauung* and a mode of identity. Nonetheless, developments such as the waning influence of the *krajowcy* groups in Wilno testified to the growing significance and relevance of national identities and national movements in the north-eastern voivodeships. Belarusian national ideology started to make inroads in rural areas in the interwar years (pp. 357–8), too. The attempts to suppress it failed and only served to make it more resilient than the authorities wished it to be.[4] Still, a Belarusian, Ukrainian or Lithuanian could be both a loyal Polish citizen and a patriot of a respective nation[5], which the author has not emphasised enough.

Some high-ranking officials like the Wilno voivode Ludwik Bociański (1892–1970) entertained plans and even expressed their determination to assimilate the indigenous rural populations of north-eastern lands. However, it was not a foregone conclusion at all (pp. 310, 365). This opinion stood in a stark contrast with the one voiced by Wanda Pełczyńska (1894–1976), who as a member of Polish parliament spoke up for Belarusian culture and language (pp. 387–8) in the wake of the almost complete shutdown and suppression of Belarusian and Lithuanian national organisations in 1936 (pp. 293, 310).

[3] Maciej Górny and Włodzimierz Borodziej, *Nasza Wojna*, i–ii (Warszawa, 2014–17).

[4] Seweryn Wysłouch, *Stosunki narodowościowe na terenie województw wschodnich [Wilno 1939–40]* (Warszawa, 2013), 262.

[5] Józef Chałasiński, *Młode pokolenie chłopów. Procesy i zagadnienia kształtowania się warstwy chłopskiej w Polsce. Świat życia, pracy i dążeń kół młodzieży wiejskiej*, ii (Warszawa, 1938), 75–86, 98; *idem*, *Młode pokolenie chłopów. Procesy i zagadnienia kształtowania się warstwy chłopskiej w Polsce. Rola kół młodzieży wiejskiej w społeczno--kulturalnych przeobrażeniach wsi*, iii (Warszawa, 1938), 95–97; Bronisław Makowski, *Litwini w Polsce 1920–1939* (Warszawa, 1986), 324.

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State-sponsored schools with Belarusian, Lithuanian and Ukrainian languages of instruction in many cases existed on paper but not in reality (pp. 383–5).

Wilno nevertheless remained the centre of Belarusian and Lithuanian national movements (p. 270) just as Lwów was for Ukrainian cultural and economic activities (pp. 142–6). However, in the case of the latter, the dynamic and scale of those activities were much bigger. The competition between Polish and Ukrainian businesses along with the increased investment of Polish capital sought to bring about further economic and social integration of Galicia and Lwów with the rest of Poland. These trends, as the author recognises, likewise helped fuel tensions between Ukrainians and Poles (p. 146).

While the book certainly deserves praise, some criticism is also due. One inevitably cannot fail to notice the book's focus on Lwów and Eastern Galicia. Given the significance of the latter within Poland as a whole, the reader cannot have many complaints. However, the chapters covering the interwar history of Lwów and East Galicia make up more than one-third of the book. While almost 145 out of 390 pages of text cover the subjects of Lwów and East Galicia, only 97 pages are given to the topics of Wilno and north-eastern voivodeships. The book is supposed to cover all of the eastern territories in an equal measure, and one is left disappointed with this imbalance. It certainly should be addressed in the next editions of the monograph.

Although Mędrzecki tries to avoid the idyllic images of the eastern lands, nostalgia could not, understandably, be completely excluded from the book (pp. 97–105). However, it was not only Poles who felt nostalgia for the era before 1939. One has just to look at the recent oral history literature and online projects from Belarus and Ukraine to establish that the 'Polish era' (*pry palakach, za polskim chasam*) is not perceived in terms of 'oppression' and 'national persecution' by non-Polish citizens of the Second Republic in their accounts of the past.[6] As far as the northeastern territories of the Second Republic are concerned, it was the situation before 1939 among other factors that was on the minds of many Polish and non-Polish citizens of the former Second Republic when they had to make decisions about leaving behind their homes and farms during the so-called 'population exchanges' in 1944–8 and 1955–8.[7]

As regards economic changes and modernization, it is important to highlight that the contemporaries were fascinated by the scale and pace of social and cultural changes, and by the improvements in standards of living

[6] Ірына Раманава and Ірына Махоўская, *Мір: гісторыя мястэчка, што расказалі яго жыхары* (Вільня, 2009), 8–33; *Зусім іншы горад. Гродна і гродзенцы ў вусных успамінах* (Гродна, 2017). For Ukrainian oral history of Eastern Galicia before 1939, see online project „Jewish Galicia & Bukovina" launched in 2009, available at: http://jgaliciabukovina.net/search/interviews.

[7] Eugeniusz Mironowicz, Siarhiej Tokć, and Ryszard Radzik, *Zmiany struktury narodowościowej na pograniczu polsko-białoruskim w XX wieku* (Białystok, 2005).

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in some local communities in the northeastern territories of the Second Republic during the 1930s. The improvements seemed significant and profound. The author could have supported his argument about the importance of these changes (pp. 344, 356) with more evidence and references, especially when it comes to oral history.[8] In this case, his argument seems to lack some substance.

While generally sharing Mędrzecki's cautious optimism, it nevertheless seems that no amount of investment could eliminate the historical preconditions of poverty and underdevelopment in the eastern lands of the Second Polish Republic in the short or medium term.[9] These conditions predated the Great War and even the nineteenth century.[10] They were part of the worldview of the local elites and engrained in the cultural attitudes of the local peasantry. What was required, as the bare minimum, was a generational change of attitudes coupled with educational activities.[11]

In its discussion of the literary and artistic life of interwar Wilno (pp. 297–303), Mędrzecki's book could have benefited from bringing to readers' attention the activities of the Jewish artistic group *Yung Vilne* (Young Wilno) (1927–43) and one of its prominent members, the émigré poet and writer Chaim Grade (1910–82), who deserves a special mention.[12] His prose written between the 1950s and 1980s brings to life Jewish Wilno, the *shtetlekh* and yeshivas of the northeastern territories of the pre-1939 Second Republic. His books, unfortunately, are not available in Polish. However, in recent decades, many of his novels and stories were translated from Yiddish into either English[13] or Russian.[14] The protagonists of his books represent all the major Jewish political parties and options, as well as those who were indifferent to politics. Communism is not necessarily the major ideology attractive to them. Religious and secular Jews,

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[8] Franciszek Sielicki, *Życie gospodarcze i społeczne, szkolnictwo oraz kultura wiejska na Wilejszczyźnie w okresie międzywojennym* (Wrocław, 1991), 37.

[9] Daniel Chirot, 'Causes and Consequences of Backwardness', in Daniel Chirot (ed.), *The Origins of backwardness in Eastern Europe: economics and politics from the Middle Ages until the early twentieth century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1991), 1–14; Derek Aldcroft, *Europe's Third World: the European Periphery in the Interwar Years* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2006), 106–26.

[10] Ivan T. Berend, *History Derailed: Central and Eastern Europe in the long nineteenth century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2008).

[11] Włodzimierz Mędrzecki, *Młodzież wiejska na ziemiach Polski centralnej 1864–1939. Procesy socjalizacji* (Warszawa, 2002).

[12] 'Grade, Chaim', in Czesław Miłosz, *Abecadło Miłosza* (Kraków, 2010), 144–7. For a history of the Yung Vilne group, see Joanna Lisek, *Jung Wilne – żydowska grupa artystyczna* (Wrocław, 2005).

[13] Chaim Grade, *The Well* (Philadelphia, 1967); *idem*, *The Yeshiva*, i–ii (Indianapolis, 1976–7); *idem*, *Rabbis and Wives* (New York, 1982).

[14] Хаим Граде, *Немой миньян* (Москва, 2010); *idem*, *Мамины субботы* (Москва, 2012); *idem*, *Безмужняя* (Москва, 2013).

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Zionists and Bundists clash in their discussions over politics and values, just like the proponents of Yiddish and Hebrew over the importance of language choice for Jews. They face difficult choices in a changing and increasingly hostile environment, which the author could have described in a bit more detail (pp. 303–7).

It is also necessary to comment on the violence. All the cases of nationalist, communist and anti-Jewish violence in the interwar years ultimately occurred somewhat in the background of everyday life. After 1939, violence moved to the foreground and was crucial for subsequent social transformations of the eastern lands of the Second Republic. The question of violence is also important if we consider Poland as an alternative for the people inside the USSR. Belarusian and Ukrainian peasants fled to Poland to escape collectivization and mass deportations,[15] with flight constituting a form of passive peasant resistance.[16] Interwar Poland and the Soviets had two fundamentally different approaches to violence and modernization. While the latter sought modernization through violence, the former had a measured approach to social change. This cannot be explained away purely by way of Poland's geopolitical and internal economic weakness or any other failings. It seems that interwar Poland and its elites had a very peculiar philosophy of statecraft to which mass terror and, the Bereza Kartuska detention camp notwithstanding (p. 160), many modern forms of violence against the individual were alien.[17]

One may argue that Mędrzecki's view that no change to or reversal of policy towards national minorities could have ensured different outcomes in 1939 (p. 390–1) is not entirely justified. Indeed, nowhere did the Polish state feel its vulnerability more strongly than in its eastern territories (p. 361). Ezra Mendelsohn's opinion that Poles considered themselves a minority in their own state is relevant here.[18] This was one reason for the statistical manipulations that occurred during the population censuses in 1921 and 1931 in the eastern territories. On the road to 1939, there were many missed opportunities when it comes to policy towards national minorities. In fact, Mędrzecki himself recognises this when he discusses Wanda Pełczyńska's protest. The failure of the Volhynia experiment did not necessarily mean that the same negative result could have been expected in the case of Belarusians and Lithuanians in the northeastern voivodeships. Moreover, the cancellation of this experiment

[15] Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge and London, 2004).

[16] James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak. Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven and London, 1985).

[17] Magda Gawin, 'Progressivism and Eugenic Thinking in Poland, 1905–1939', in Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling (eds.), *Blood and Homeland. Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900–1940* (Budapest and New York, 2007), 167–84.

[18] Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars* (Bloomington, 1983), 11–83

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happened amid the so-called ‘revindication of the souls’ campaign,[19] which further alienated Christian Orthodox Belarusians and Ukrainians. This had deleterious consequences for the Second Polish Republic, making it much less socially cohesive and even more vulnerable to external aggression. And in the case of Belarusian organisations and schools with Belarusian language of instruction, it was precisely the 1936 campaign for such schools organized jointly by the Association for Belarusian School (*Tavarystva Belaruskaj Shkoly*) and Belarusian Institute for Farming and Culture (*Belaruski Instytut Haspadarki i Kul’tury*) that prompted the shutdown of these two and other Belarusian organisations by the authorities of Wilno voivodeship. However, there was no shortage of applications requesting the opening of schools with the Belarusian language of instruction.[20] Belarusian peasants were not always indifferent to schooling their children in both Polish and Belarusian.

The remarks above in no way should undermine the significance of the monograph. The importance of Włodzimierz Mędrzecki’s book transcends its purely academic value. This reviewer, therefore, believes that this book will be conducive to stimulating and raising interest among non-academics and non-historians on the subject of interwar eastern lands. It will certainly become a standard for historians of how history books should be written and conceived. And, last but not least, it will stimulate dialogue and build bridges between researchers from Poland and neighbouring countries, especially Belarus and Ukraine.

proofreading Paul Vickers

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Dagmar Hájková, Pavel Horák, Vojtěch Kessler, and Miroslav Michela (eds.), *Sláva republice! Oficiální svátky a oslavy v meziválečném Československu*, Academia, Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, Praha, 2018, 532 pp., ills., index of persons, bibliography; series: České moderní dějiny, 4

This substantial edited volume of texts by Czech and Slovak authors explores memory and sovereignty, two themes that have become highly relevant recently not only in historiography but also in the public sphere. The volume focuses on state-sanctioned political rituals in interwar Czechoslovakia, analysing state holidays alongside both unofficial and semi-official practices of commemoration. The authors adopt a broad approach as they also examine

[19] Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist’s Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven and London, 2005), 162–7.

[20] Ксенія Разуванава, *Беларускі інстытут гаспадаркі і культуры ў Заходняй Беларусі (1926–1936 гг.)* (Мінск, 2013), 117.

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the history of holidays that were only indirectly connected to the new state, such as 1 May and religious holidays. They also deserve praise for likewise considering the memory cultures of the Hungarian and German minorities. The volume includes analysis of legislation alongside social and cultural historical studies. The numerous well-chosen illustrations make for a more interesting read, something that is important for a work of such length.

The opening introduction outlines key concepts, such as holiday and ritual, while also presenting the methodological inspirations guiding the volume. The authors' moderate postmodernist inclinations thus become evident, as they highlight the performative and theatrical nature of these aspects of social life. They also adopt a constructivist approach to national communities. They use these methodological tools to work their way through a significant wealth of published and archival sources. Even though they were only interested in selected anniversaries, the authors have consulted an impressive number of periodicals written in the Republic's most important languages. The archival sources are located not only in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but also in Rome, London and Budapest, although they did not explore any materials from the Transcarpathian region, which was part of interwar Czechoslovakia. The concise conclusion, meanwhile, offers a clear answer to the question of the extent to which the Czechoslovak ritual calendar contributed to the formation of a new civic community. Their verdict: very little. This finding, then, allows us to read the book as a catalogue outlining the differences between various social and ethnic groups. Some of these groups did accept the official symbolic politics and practices, either permanently or temporarily, but at no point in the history of the interwar Republic is it possible to speak of either general acceptance of official symbolism or the formation of a standard set of symbols.

There are more than five hundred pages between the introduction and conclusion containing analysis, occasionally overly detailed, of ritual practices in interwar Czechoslovakia. In the first chapter, Jana Čechurová offers an outline of the legal situation by presenting parliamentary debates relating to the declaration of state holidays. She shows that differences of opinion among parliamentarians ran not only along political and ethnic lines. The debate was just as fierce over the impact new holidays could have on economic productivity and in ensuring workers received fair pay – a particularly acute problem for day labourers. Consequently, the discussions went on for years, and the solutions were only partial, as responsibility for deciding whether or not to work on a holiday was left to the discretion of factory owners and workers. While compromise prevailed in the Czechoslovak parliament, the Republic's symbolic politics caused an international crisis in the mid-1920s. Legislation regulating holidays passed in 1925 removed a holiday marking St John of Nepomuk, replacing it with holidays for SS. Cyril and Methodius and Jan Hus (a heretic, according to the then Catholic norm, who was burned at the stake at the Council of Constance). This caused the Apostolic nuncio

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Francesco Marmaggi to leave Prague in protest, with diplomatic relations with the Vatican subsequently frozen for several years. Čechurová also explores further controversies that ran in parallel to the all too sedate parliamentary debates. Slovakian Ľudáks associated with the Slovak People's Party led by the priest Andrej Hlinka consistently refused to recognise 28 October 1918 as the founding date of the Republic. They had a point, as nothing of note happened on that day in Slovakia. Two days later, though, Slovak political activists did gather in the city of Martin, expressing their desire to form an independent state. The competition between 28 and 30 October remains evident even now, as was clear in autumn 2018 (when the Slovak government introduced one-time off-work day on 30 October while Czechia celebrated it on 28 October). Many Hungarians and Germans also boycotted the holiday as they refused to identify with the post-war order in Europe and yearned for the restoration of old borders. Official holidays posed problems for the authorities of the short-lived Second Republic with the state nearing collapse. It was impossible to host any festivities on 28 October 1938, so the government asked its citizens to mark the day with hard work.

The next chapter is the longest in the volume. Dagmar Hájková and Miroslav Michela examine 28 October, the critical date in the Republic's official calendar. They start with a description of the events of autumn 1918 and the efforts to quickly establish it as a holiday the following year in the face of competition from other possible dates. They conclude with the abovementioned call to mark the holiday with work in 1938. After the initial conflicts over whether to make it a national or state holiday, the tensions with the German and Hungarian minorities, and the verbal disagreements with the Slovak right-wing opposition, citizens of the interwar Republic generally came to accept Independence Day and the related rituals. The chapter focuses largely on the colourful celebrations marking the tenth anniversary of independence. With time, 28 October came to enjoy popular support, although the largest national minorities and extreme opposition parties, both right-wing and communist, continued to oppose it. However, the positive potential contained in the holiday was harnessed not only by Czechs and Slovaks but also by anti-fascist and democratic organisations among Hungarians and Germans. For them, the national holiday of the Czechoslovak Republic also came to stand for a celebration of republicanism as such in the second half of the 1930s.

However, another holiday was much less democratic in nature. The birthday of the president of the Czechoslovak Republic, Tomáš G. Masaryk, on 7 March served the cult around this revered and outstanding individual. He was showered in praise, letters from children and various gifts that were sometimes highly valuable and sometimes worthless. His authority significantly transcended ethnic divisions, as he was considered a just leader not only by the citizens belonging to the Czechoslovak nationality (to use the official terminology of the time). For many members of minorities, the cult around

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the president constituted a logical continuation of the respect afforded to the last-but-one Emperor of Austria, a similar father-figure to whom Masaryk was seen as the rightful heir. As often happens in such cases, the expressions of respect bordered on devotion, while his adulators were sometimes overzealous. Hence the efforts to take legal action against people who supposedly or indeed dishonoured the president, or the rather curious legislation known as 'lex Masaryk' that affirmed for all eternity his outstanding services to the state. Following Masaryk's death and the conclusion of the funeral rituals that involved thousands of people, his successor Edvard Beneš continued the legal custom of celebrating the president's birthday. In any case, he did not enjoy this honour for long. Masaryk's birthday did briefly return to the official calendar following the Second World War.

The third chapter by Vojtěch Kessler discusses a somewhat different holiday, namely the anniversary of the Battle of Zborov, where the Czechoslovak Legions emerged victorious from a bloody struggle in 1917. In the First Republic, the Legionnaires formed the elite across almost the entire political spectrum. The author of the contribution argues that contrary to popular belief, the Legionnaires actually played a relatively minor role in the Czechoslovak army. In contrast to 28 October or 7 March, the anniversary of Zborov tended to highlight political fault lines. For most Slovaks, whose contribution to the Legions was limited, if this day came to stand for anything, then it was Prague's dominant role. For German and Hungarian veterans of the Great War, meanwhile, celebrating the victory of a unit formed of deserters was not only a betrayal of their conscience but also of reason. Indeed, this presented the state with difficulties as they now expected loyalty from recruits of German and Hungarian nationality, while the communists could never forget that the Legionnaires fought battles against the Red Army. Indeed, the veterans were not shy of criticising the homeland that they had long dreamed of as they found it was parsimonious, full of self-serving party politics and unwilling to recognize their wartime sacrifices.

First May is the subject of Pavel Horák's chapter. In theory, this workers' holiday could have been as polarising as the anniversary of Zborov. However, Czechoslovakia actually managed to adopt this holiday without significant difficulties, granting it official recognition even before the socialist Republic of Austria. Despite the tensions between the socialists and communists who organized separate processions on 1 May, the holiday was usually peaceful, making Czechoslovakia something of an exception in the region where it was either banned or proved to be a rather violent occasion. Furthermore, Czech and German social-democrats (with Slovaks and Hungarians present in smaller numbers) marched side-by-side. A particularly fascinating aspect of Horák's text is his description of the 'privatized' 1 May celebrations organized by the management of the Baťa company in Zlín. Several thousand people enjoyed a party that was a mixture of a parade in honour of the employer

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and works jolly. In light of the fact that the Nazis also respected the 1 May holiday and given its equally prominent place in post-war Czechoslovakia, Horák stresses that this remains the only day to have been free from work since the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic until today.

The next three chapters focus on figures from the more distant past, a fact that gave these days their specific character and helped calm the political tensions surrounding these holidays. Jan Hus (discussed in Dagmar Hájkova and Eva Hajdinová's text), SS. Cyril and Methodius (Miroslav Michela) and the patron saint of the Kingdom of Bohemia St. Wenceslas (Eva Hajdinová) constitute longue-durée sites of Czech (and, in the case of the Slavic missionaries, also Slovak) memory. All three chapters offer a long-term view of the history of their impact on the public sphere, reaching back far beyond 1918. The contributions also consider the figures' religious dimensions in the context of the history of the cult of saints and pilgrimages. The most significant controversies were, of course, related to Hus who, until recently, was still considered a heretic by the Catholic Church. This was further exacerbated by the fact that his holiday replaced one dedicated to St John of Nepomuk. This exchange was not only symbolic but also material in nature. Starting in 1918, a wave of iconoclasm swept through Bohemia that targeted the near-ubiquitous Catholic images depicting the martyr. Indeed, the Hus cult was limited to Bohemia and was secular in nature, thus according to the historical narrative that emerged in the nineteenth century. It presented the Hus era as the most important and most significant period in the history of Bohemia. With the exception of Protestant communities, Moravia and Slovakia were largely indifferent, but occasionally hostile towards this narrative. In the east of the Republic, the celebration of SS. Cyril and Methodius enjoyed much higher popularity, with some Catholics using it as a way to avoid Hussite and secular republican propaganda. This was all the more the case because the cult around the Salonican brothers served as a reminder not only of the Great Moravian period but also of Pribina's Duchy of Nitra, which Slovak historians consider to be the first native state structure. Least controversial was the holiday marking St. Wenceslas, as it was approved by Catholics of all nationalities. It was only towards the end of the 1930s, as international tensions increased that the patron saint again became an instrument of symbolic politics. The September 1938 holiday provided an opportunity to demonstrate national unity and the closing of ranks, including those of the military. Just a few months later, with the Republic subordinated to the Third Reich, Duke Wenceslas, who also allowed his country to be subordinated to the Holy Roman Empire, came to symbolize geopolitical necessity and thus provided a model for the unfortunate president Hácha.

The final two chapters explore non-state traditions, including those that challenged the state's interests. Vojtěch Kessler outlines the history of the political instrumentalization of the tragic death of several dozen protestors

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who were killed by the Czechoslovak army in March 1919 in several German-majority localities. While the protests were triggered by shortages and the denial of the right to vote in the elections that had been called by Austria's social-democratic government, "the March Fallen" became a symbol for the Sudeten Germans' nationalist movement, which was successfully exploited by the Nazis in the 1930s. It is hardly paradoxical that the greater the symbolic significance of the victims, who were after all familiar members of local communities, the smaller the interest of the Nazi authorities in the individual fates of their surviving family members.

The final chapter is somewhat different as it offers a general description of Hungarian symbols in interwar Czechoslovakia, while also noting Slovak and Czech responses to the perceived revisionist threat. Miroslav Michela looks beyond a single site of memory and instead offers a rich and interesting description of the struggle for hegemony over public space in a particular region, namely former Upper Hungary, which after 1918 effectively became the Slovak part of the Republic. As was the case with the cults surrounding saints and martyrs, the narrative goes back to a time long before 1918 in tracing the formation of the Hungarian symbolic imagination. It is clear that the actions of the Republic in Slovakia in this sphere were reactionary. 20 August, the feast of the Hungarian patron St Stephen, was both a traditional Catholic holiday and the key symbol of Admiral Horthy's authoritarian regime. Despite no legislation being passed to this effect, in southern Slovakia this was effectively a day off work that was sometimes accompanied by demonstrations led by Hungarian revisionists. There were two aspects to the Czechoslovak response. On the one hand, the administration and Church sought to limit any celebrations to the private and religious sphere. On the other hand, the largest political parties in the Republic organized a march on 20 August 1927 in Bratislava in protest against Hungarian revisionism. Their efforts were complicated in the long-run by the fact that the cult of St Stephen was not exclusive to the Hungarians, as the Slovaks also revered him. A similar ambiguity also surrounded the symbolism relating to the Hungarian revolution of 1848–9. During the first years of Czechoslovak independence, public gatherings on the anniversary of 15 March were banned, and legionnaires destroyed memorials to the Hungarian heroes of those events. Towards the end of the 1930s, however, some memorials were restored.

Sláva republice! offers descriptions of hundreds of similar cases. The volume thus depicts arguments over establishing or abolishing holidays, erecting and removing monuments, protests and counter-protests, while also offering insight into symbols that while filled with the noblest ideals went mostly unnoticed. Despite what is suggested by the subtitle, the authors did not focus solely on holidays in interwar Czechoslovakia. The book is all the better for it. Otherwise, it would have been difficult to recreate the controversies surrounding the formation of the new state calendar. Such controversies were

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undoubtedly not specific to Czechoslovakia. Symbolic politics is a battleground in every country. If there was something specific about interwar Czechoslovakia when compared to its neighbours, then it was its democratic culture of finding solutions. Sometimes it was like trying to cross a minefield. The state was not presented with a blank slate and thus had to deal with the burden of earlier religious, national and political symbols and traditions. What is perhaps most interesting about this volume are the authors' observations about the successes in negotiating this difficult path: left-wing organisations of the Hungarian minority celebrating 28 October in the 1930s as a symbol of a republicanism that contrasted with dictatorship in Hungary; Slovak members of parliament supporting a motion to honour St Wenceslas; the restoration of some monuments to Hungarian national heroes in Slovakia; the cult of president Masaryk that united various ethnic groups. Such phenomena are worthy of the attentions of historians of interwar Central and Eastern Europe because they are a testament to the ability to compromise, a virtue that was unfortunately in short supply during that period, likewise in this part of the world.

The volume does not break new ground concerning the methods employed, or the sources explored. Indeed, the existing literature, not only in Czech or Slovak, on each theme explored here, is already reasonably rich – and thus cited conscientiously by the contributors. Specific aspects of Czechoslovak memory culture have already been analysed by scholars including Natali Stegmann, Nancy Wingfield and Katya Kocourek, as well as by Marcin Jarząbek in a book on Polish and Czech legionnaires reviewed in APH. I am not entirely convinced by some of the choices made by the team of authors. I find, for example, that the examination of the cult around the German victims of 4 March 1919 fails to match the other examples both in terms of scope and depth. Perhaps a chapter on the saints and symbols revered by the German minority, analogous to the study of the Hungarian minority, would have been more appropriate? Given that Miroslav Michela offers a brief presentation of the symbolic culture of Transleithania (the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) in the final chapter, perhaps it would have been relevant to precede the narrative about republican symbols with an introduction covering the same issue in Cisleithania (the Austrian part)? Several other similar criticisms could be levelled against the book. However, the authors would be entitled to respond that what they have offered is a solid analysis and a wealth of information. Perhaps the sheer weight of facts, the mass of material and the collective authorship (which makes it easier to secure funding but hinders the writing of ground-breaking studies) ultimately overwhelmed the authors. Ultimately, readers might expect the amount of effort invested to have yielded more substantial findings.

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